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## **USDA BRINGS FUNDS TO STURBRIDGE**

**STURBRIDGE, MA** – Congressman Richard Neal joined USDA Rural Development State Director David Tuttle, Senator Stephen Brewer and Representative Reed Hillman today at the Sturbridge Town Hall to present Town Administrator, James Malloy with a check for \$1,962,000 in federal loan and grant funds. The \$1,087,000 low interest loan and \$875,000 grant will be used by the town to construct a sanitary sewer system around Big Alum Pond.

The current on-site wastewater systems have created problems for the residents around Big Alum Pond since traditionally many of the homes there were used only seasonally and are now being used year round. As a result of the increased population, on-site systems have become ineffective and unable to carry the load.

USDA funding of the sewer construction will appreciably reduce the financial burden of the project to the end users. "As it is a significant component of the mission of our agency to provide rural communities with the necessary resources for essential public facilities and services," said Rural Development State Director Tuttle, "it brings me great pleasure to deliver these needed funds to Sturbridge on behalf of President Bush and Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman."

"At a time when federal and state resources are shrinking, I am pleased that we could secure these important funds for the Town of Sturbridge," said Congressman Richard E. Neal. "It is my belief that the residents around Big Alum Pond will see tangible improvements with the construction of a new sanitary sewer system. The USDA deserves great credit for developing this program that benefits rural communities like Sturbridge."

"I am delighted that this money has been approved for my hometown of Sturbridge," said State Representative Reed Hillman. "The release of these funds to the community will help to provide a valuable service to the residents of Big Alum Pond. The United States Department of Agriculture has been a tremendous asset since this proposal was first put together. The credit goes to them and to the Sturbridge town officials for all of their

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hard work at making this idea become a reality.”

The objective of the USDA Rural Development Water and Wastewater Programs is to develop public water and waste water systems in order to reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources and for the improvement and planning of solid waste facilities.

“I am so pleased to join with USDA and the Town of Sturbridge in announcing this grant today,” said Senator Stephen Brewer. “Not only will the residents of Big Alum Lake experience an improved quality of life as a result of this project, but the environment and unique history of this area will be preserved and protected.”

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